

CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT
EDUCATION

1430 N Street
P. O. Box 944272
Sacramento, CA
94244-2720

Jack O'Connell
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

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Dear Superintendent:

On January 8, 2003, the State Board of Education (SBE) took action on a series of items on the incorporation of the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) provisions of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act into the current statewide accountability system. The purpose of this letter is to summarize the actions of the SBE and to provide you with a brief preview of accountability activities for the next few months.

In this summary, I am assuming a certain familiarity with the Title I AYP provisions of the NCLB. If you have not yet done so, I urge you to review documents available through the United States Department of Education (USDE) Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/asst.html>.

It is important to note that the USDE will determine whether all of the specific features of California's definition of AYP comply with the requirements of NCLB; however, we anticipate that the broad approach taken by the SBE will meet with the approval of the federal government.

State Board Action on NCLB

Definition of Adequate Yearly Progress

After extensive deliberations as well as preliminary discussions with the USDE, on January 8, 2003, **the SBE adopted a definition of AYP that would conform strictly to the new NCLB requirements** – the “percent proficient” metric will be used, the starting points and annual targets will be established as prescribed by law, and results would be reported separately for English language arts and mathematics.

The California Department of Education (CDE) will establish annual growth targets sufficient to meet the performance goal in the NCLB: all schools and local education agencies (LEAs) must have 100 percent of their students at or above the proficient level in English language arts and mathematics by 2013-2014. These targets are applied not only to schools and LEAs but also numerically significant subgroups within those entities. **Under the provisions of NCLB, all LEAs and schools will be subject to an AYP determination, even if they are not receiving Title I assistance.**

The Academic Performance Index (API) will continue to be calculated and reported without modification. Annual API growth targets will still be calculated as five percent of the distance to the performance goal of 800, which remains unchanged. The API will function as an additional academic indicator under the provisions of the NCLB.

California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)

NCLB requires that at the high school level assessments cover the essential knowledge and skills that students are expected to demonstrate irrespective of grade level or courses completed. **The SBE has adopted the CAHSEE as the core knowledge test for grades 10-12.** Results from the annual grade 10 administration of this exam will be used to determine AYP under NCLB for all high schools.

Accountability for Small Schools or Schools Without Assessment Results

The SBE has adopted the CDE recommendation that the scores of small schools be aggregated into a district accountability measure, which is required under NCLB. The CDE will provide technical assistance to LEAs about appropriate methods to use for determining AYP for these schools.

Alternative Schools Accountability Model (ASAM)

ASAM schools will be treated in the same manner as all other public schools, even if their purpose is to serve students less than a full academic year. The same measure of “percent proficient or above” will be used to determine AYP. APIs will be calculated for ASAM schools, unless they have too few students to generate a school-level report. Test results for all ASAM schools will be aggregated into the results for the appropriate LEA and into the state level AYP report.

Mobility Exclusion

NCLB has very specific mobility rules that dictate where students should be counted for accountability. If a student has been continuously enrolled in a school for a full year, the student should be counted at the school level. If the student has attended more than one school within a district, but has been enrolled in the district for a full year, the student should be counted at the district level. And finally, all students, even those who are not continuously enrolled in a district for a full year, should be counted at the state level. **The SBE has adopted the recommendation of the CDE to change our current state mobility definition for the API to conform to the new requirements of NCLB.** This change could be implemented with the 2003 Base API

(reported in January 2004), since an item to collect this information was already added to the 2003 Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program student answer document.

Addition of Two New Subgroups

NCLB requires AYP determinations for two student subgroups beyond those already specified in state law – students with disabilities and English learners. **The SBE has adopted the recommendation of the CDE that these two subgroups be added to the API system as well.**

Graduation Rates

NCLB requires that the state use the graduation rate as an additional indicator for high schools. Since California currently does not have a universal student information system, **the SBE has adopted the recommendation of the CDE that the combined pass rates on the CAHSEE serve as a proxy for that rate until such time as the information system is fully implemented.**

Participation Rates

NCLB requires that 95 percent of students take the assessments used to determine AYP. This participation rate applies to all schools and all subgroups, across each content area. Currently, under the Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA), California has set a 95 percent participation rate for awards eligibility for elementary and middle schools and a 90 percent rate for high schools. **The SBE has adopted the CDE recommendation to increase the participation rate for high schools from 90 percent to 95 percent and approve the calculation of participation rates for numerically significant subgroups.**

Minimum Subgroup Size

Currently state law defines a numerically significant subgroup as one that was comprised of 100 students or 30 students who represented at least 15 percent of the student population. **The SBE has adopted the CDE recommendation to revise this definition to 100 students or 50 students who represent at least 15 percent of the students to be tested.**

District Accountability

Under NCLB, LEAs are also subject to AYP determination. **The SBE has adopted the CDE recommendation that the district report employ the same measures as the school report – the percent of students in the district at or above proficient in English language arts and mathematics as well as a district API.** This would include the same calculations for all numerically significant subgroups in the district.

Definition of Proficient

The SBE has adopted the CDE recommendation that the current proficient level on the California Standards Tests serve as the proficient level for NCLB. Cut points will be established for the CAHSEE to generate a proportion of students at or above proficient roughly equivalent to the proportion at proficient at the same grade. This would **not** impact the CAHSEE passing score, which was set in a separate process.

Upcoming Accountability Activities

NCLB

On January 31, 2003, the CDE will submit an accountability workbook to the USDE that explains how the state intends to comply with the accountability provisions of the NCLB. Following that submission, a USDE peer review team will evaluate the workbook in order to determine the progress of the state in implementing the critical accountability elements of NCLB, particularly whether the policies that the SBE has adopted comply with federal AYP regulations. This evaluation will include a site visit. Following this visit, the state will be expected to make any adjustments in its definition of AYP prior to the submission of the final state Title I plan in May 2003.

Base 2002 API Report

The CDE is continuing with its legal responsibility to generate the 2002 Base API Report in mid-February. The report will include statewide API ranks, similar schools ranks, and API growth targets for 2003. The Base 2002 API will include the following components:

- 2002 results from the Stanford Achievement Test, Ninth Edition (Stanford 9) norm-referenced test;
- 2002 results from the California Standards Test in English language arts;
- 2002 results from the California Standards Test in Mathematics;
- 2002 results from the California High School Exit Examination (for high schools only); and
- 2002 results from the California Standards Test in history/social science (for high schools only).

On January 8, 2003, the SBE adjusted the weights of the components of the 2002 Base API Report, responding to technical concerns raised in conjunction with the changeover from the Stanford 9 to the California Achievement Test (CAT 6), which takes place in 2003. Charts that detail the new indicator weights are attached to this letter. Additional information on the 2002 Base API can be accessed on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/psaa/api>.

2002 AYP Report

We anticipate that in May 2003 each school and LEA will receive an AYP report detailing its 2002 baseline data. This will include the percentage of students at or above proficient by school and by numerically significant subgroup. The report will include the 2003 target that all LEAs, schools, and numerically significant subgroups will be expected to meet in order to make AYP. It will also include information on the reporting of 2003 AYP results.

Conclusion

Rather than modifying the API beyond recognition, the SBE has chosen to integrate AYP requirements into the established California accountability system. It also has elected not to downgrade the meaning of "proficient," emphasizing a commitment to the belief that all students can achieve at high levels. These steps guarantee continuity in the event that the federal requirements are revised in the coming years.

Everyone recognizes that the AYP targets are extraordinarily ambitious. Not a single school in California currently has 100 percent of its students at or above the proficient level of performance. Therefore, every school and LEA is in need of at least some degree of improvement. As U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige noted, NCLB does not use the phrase "failing schools." The emphasis instead is on getting better results for all of our students. This is also the theme that the SBE and I have struck, and we intend to reiterate it in the coming months.

If you have any questions about how the AYP requirements fit into our current accountability system please contact, William Padia, Director, Policy and Evaluation Division, at (916) 319-0869 or Geno Flores, Deputy Superintendent, Assessment and Accountability Branch, at (916) 319-0812.

Sincerely,

JACK O'CONNELL

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Enclosure

API Indicator Weights

Elementary and Middle Schools (Grades 2-8)

Content Area	2000-2001 API Cycle	2001-2002 API Cycle		2002-2003 API Cycle		2002-2003 API Cycle	
	<u>2000 Base API</u> and 2001 Growth API	<u>2001 Base API</u> and 2002 Growth API		Previously Published 2002-2003 Weights		<u>2002 Base API</u> and 2003 Growth API Final Weights*	
English Language Arts (ELA)	NRT	NRT	CST	NRT	CST	NRT	CST
ELA NRT (Reading)	30%	24%		24%		12%	
(Language)	15%	(12%)		(12%)		(6%)	
(Spelling)	15%	(6%)		(6%)		(3%)	
		(6%)		(6%)		(3%)	
ELA CST		36%			36%		48%
Mathematics							
Math NRT	40%	40%		16%		8%	
CST MATH					24%		32%
TOTAL	100%	64%	36%	40%	60%	20%	80%

* Approved by the State Board of Education 1/8/03

API Indicator Weights

High Schools (Grades 9-11)

Content Area	2000-2001 API Cycle	2001-2002 API Cycle		2002-2003 API Cycle			2002-2003 API Cycle		
	<u>2000 Base API</u> and 2001 Growth API	<u>2001 Base API</u> and 2002 Growth API		Previously Published 2002-2003 Weights			<u>2002 Base API</u> and 2003 Growth API Final Weights*		
	NRT	NRT	CST	NRT	CST	CAHSEE	NRT	CST	CAHSEE
English Language Arts (ELA)									
ELA NRT		16%		6%			6%		
(Reading)	20%	(8%)		(3%)			(3%)		
(Language)	20%	(8%)		(3%)			(3%)		
ELA CST			24%		24%			35%	
CAHSEE ELA						10%			10%
Mathematics									
Math NRT	20%	20%		3%			3%		
CST MATH					12%			18%	
CAHSEE MATH						5%			5%
Science									
Science NRT	20%	20%		20%			3%		
Social Science									
Social Science NRT	20%	20%							
CST Social Science					20%			20%	
TOTAL	100%	76%	24%	29%	56%	15%	12%	73%	15%

* Approved by the State Board of Education 1/8/03